Amendments to the Specification:

After the title and before the first line of the specification, please add the subheading:

Background of the Invention

Please amend the second full paragraph of page 1 as follows:

Coating devices are used for coating metal strips and sheet metals with zinc, aluminum, tin, lead, galvalum or galfan. In doing so, the metal strip or sheet metal is drawn through a metal melt of the coating metal which is several hundred degrees hot: the metal strip is continuously immersed downward into the metal melt, is deviated upward by a rotating deviating shaft in the metal melt, is steadied by a stabilizing shaft and runs upwards out of the metal melt again. The support of the deviating shaft and/or the stabilizing shaft in the melt is effected in open slide bearings which are configured as wearing bearings. Because of the occurring great radial forces, the high melt temperature and the possibly high chemical aggressiveness of the metal melt, the slide bearings are subject to heavy wear. In a continuously operating coating installation, the slide bearings are worn so heavily even after a few days that they have to be replaced. Each of the slide bearings is formed by a bearing housing and a non-closed bearing bush which is held therein and includes a pair of bearing surfaces. If the pair of bearing surfaces is worn, i.e., if the respective shaft journal has pitted deeply into the two bearing surfaces, the complete bearing bush must be replaced by a new bearing bush. To this end, the shaft journals have to be withdrawn from the bearing housing while the shaft is lifted out of the metal melt. Only then, the worn bearing ~~bushs~~ bushings can be replaced by new bearing ~~bushs~~ bushings. Thus, several hours are required to exchange the two bearings, which is a great cost factor ~~with a value of up to 200 million DM in coating installations~~.

Please delete the fourth (last) paragraph of page 1 in its entirety as follows:

~~The object is solved, according to the invention, with the features of claim 1.~~

Before the first paragraph of page 2, please add the subheading:

Summary of the Invention

After the fourth full paragraph on page 3, please add the following paragraph and subheading as follows:

Still further advantages of the present invention will be appreciated to those of ordinary skill in the art upon reading and understand the following detailed description.

Brief Description of the Drawings

The invention may take form in various components and arrangements of components, and in various process operations and arrangements of process operations. The drawings are only for the purpose of illustrating preferred embodiments and are not to be construed as limiting the invention.

Please delete the fifth and sixth paragraphs of page 4 in its entirety as follows:

~~Hereinafter, an embodiment of the invention is explained in detail with reference to the drawings.~~

~~In the Figures:~~

Before the fourth paragraph of page 4, please add the following subheading:

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Please amend the third paragraph of page 5 as follows:

As can be seen in Fig. 1 - 4, the two immersed ends of the pivot arms 17_1,17_2 are provided with slide bearings 26_1,26_2 each in which the deviating shaft 16 is rotatably supported. The two slide bearings 26_1,26_2 are wearing bearings which are substantially formed by a bearing housing 32 and a bearing bush or bushing 34 inserted therein. The two shaft journals 28 of the deviating shaft 16 are inserted and supported in the bearing ~~bushs~~ bushing 34. The bearing ~~bush~~ bushing is a sleeve which is completely closed circumferentially in the way of a cylinder and which comprises four pairs 361 - 364 of bearing surfaces altogether. Each pair 361 - 364 of bearing surfaces is formed by two neighboring bearing surfaces 38. All bearing surfaces 38 are equally distributed over the circumference so that they form together an equilateral octagon with an angle of 135° between two neighboring bearing surfaces 38. Each bearing ~~bush~~ bushing is integrally formed and consists of zircon oxide but may also consist of another ceramic material.

Please amend the last paragraph of page 5 which continues to page 6 as follows:

The outer circumference of the bearing ~~bushs~~ bushings 34 and the inner circumference of the bearing housing 32 consisting of metal have the form of an annular ring or sleeve each, a gap of about 0.5 mm remaining between the bearing ~~bush~~ bushing outside and the bearing ~~bush~~ bushing inside. Thus, it is ensured that the bearing ~~bush~~ bushing 34 can be virtually turned in the bearing housing 32 without any resistance

Please amend the second full paragraph of page 6 to read as follows:

In the region of the closed bottom of the bearing housing 32, an axial stop plate 44 of ceramics is ~~let in~~ mounted.

Please amend the last paragraph of page 6 as follows:

As is particularly apparent from Fig. 1, the resultant force R of the radial forces acting on the two slide bearings 26_1,26_2 , which has been occasioned by the two tensioned metal strip legs, acts approximately in the direction of the median line of the angle of the two legs of the metal strip 12, 12'. The two bearing surfaces 38 of a pair of bearing surfaces in its position of use are arranged approximately at both sides of the radial force resultant R, i.e., the radial force resultant R lies about in the middle between the two bearing surfaces 38 of the respective pair 36_1 of bearing surfaces. As soon as the two bearing surfaces 38 of a pair 36_1 of bearing surfaces are worn, the respective pivot arms 17_1, 17_2, 20 are pivoted out of the metal melt 14. In the state of being pivoted out, the fixing element 40 is withdrawn from the fixing element opening of the bearing housing 32 and the first fixing groove 42_1 of the bearing bush 34 and turned by 90°. Thereby, the worn pair 36_1 of bearing surfaces is turned out of its position of use and an unworn pair 36_2 of bearing surfaces is turned into the position of use. In this new rotational position of the bearing bush 34, the fixing element 40 is inserted into the associated fixing groove 42_2 ~~und~~ and thus, the bearing bush 34 is secured against twisting in circumferential direction. Subsequently, the corresponding pivot arms 17_1, 17_2, 20 are lowered into the metal melt 14 into their working positions again.

Please amend the first paragraph of page 7 to read as follows:

With its shaft journals, the stabilizing shaft 18 is also borne in circumferentially closed bearing ~~bushs~~ bushings with four pairs of bearing surfaces. Here, a worn pair of bearing surfaces is also replaceable by a non-worn pair of bearing surfaces by twisting the bearing ~~bush~~ bushing.

Please amend the last paragraph of page 7 to read as follows:

By providing several pairs of bearing surfaces in the bearing ~~bush~~ bushing and by the bearing ~~bush=s~~ bushing's ability of rotating and being fixed in the bearing housing, a worn pair of bearing surfaces can simply be replaced by twisting. The bearing ~~bush~~ bushing must be exchanged only when all pairs of bearing surfaces are worn.

After the last line of page 7, please insert the following paragraph:

The invention has been described with reference to the preferred embodiments. Modifications and alterations may occur to others upon reading and understanding the preceding detailed description. It is intended that the invention be constructed as including all such modifications and alterations insofar as they come within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.

On page 8, after the heading "Claims", please insert the following paragraph:

Having thus described the preferred embodiments, the invention is now claimed to be: